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What is claimed is:

1. A method for inactivating pathogens in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

administering to the individual a pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective pathogen inactivating amount of a copolymer of maleic acid and styrenesulfonic acid, or a salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent therefor.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the effective pathogen inactivating amount of the inhibitor compound is from 0.5 mg to 5 g per dose.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the pharmaceutical composition is administered topically.

4. A method for ¹inactivating ²pathogens in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

³administering to the individual a pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective pathogen inactivating amount of polyvinyl phthalate sulphate, or a salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent therefor.

5. The method according to claim 4, wherein the polyvinyl phthalate sulphate is a mixed ester comprising phthalate and sulphate functional groups on a polyvinyl backbone.

6. The method according to claim 4, wherein the effective pathogen inactivating amount is 0.5 mg to 5 g per dose.

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7. The method according to claim 4, wherein the pharmaceutical composition is administered topically.

8. A method for preventing transmission or infection of sexually transmitted diseases in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

administering a pharmaceutical composition to a portion or part of the body of said individual that is involved in a sexual activity or a sexual contact, said administration being prior to said sexual activity or sexual contact, or immediately thereafter, said pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a copolymer of maleic acid and styrenesulfonic acid, or a salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent therefor; and

wherein said sexually transmitted disease is caused by, or is chlamydia trachomatis, herpes simplex virus, syphilis, gonorrhea or papilloma virus.

9. A method for preventing transmission or infection of sexually transmitted diseases in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

administering a pharmaceutical composition to a portion or part of an individual's body that is involved in a sexual activity or a sexual contact, said administration being prior to said sexual activity or sexual contact, or immediately thereafter, said pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a copolymer of maleic acid and styrenesulfonic acid, or a salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent therefor; and

wherein said sexually transmitted disease is caused by human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

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I 10. The method according to claim 8 or 9, wherein the effective amount is 0.5 mg to 5 g.

11. The method according to claim 8 or 9, wherein the pharmaceutical composition is administered topically.

II 12. A method for preventing transmission or infection of sexually transmitted diseases in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

5 administering³ a pharmaceutical composition to a portion or part of an individual's body that is involved in a sexual activity or a sexual contact, said administration being prior to said sexual activity or sexual contact, or immediately⁴ thereafter, said pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a polyvinyl phthalate sulphate, or a salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent therefor; and

10 wherein said sexually transmitted disease is caused by or is chlamydia trachomatis, herpes simplex virus, syphilis, gonorrhea or papilloma virus. *relato?*

13. A method for preventing¹ transmission or infection of sexually transmitted diseases in an individual in need thereof, said method comprising:

5 administering³ a pharmaceutical composition to a portion or part of an individual's body that is involved in a sexual activity or a sexual contact, said administration being prior to said sexual activity or sexual contact, or immediately⁴ thereafter, said pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a polyvinyl phthalate sulphate, or a salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent therefor; and

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wherein said sexually transmitted disease is caused by human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). (2)

14. The method according to claim 12 or 13, wherein the effective amount is 0.5 mg to 5 g per dose.

15. The method according to claim 12 or 13, wherein the pharmaceutical composition is administered topically.

16. A method for treating and preventing bacterial vaginitis in a female individual in need thereof, said method comprising

administering to the vaginal area of said female individual, a pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a copolymer of maleic acid and styrenesulfonic acid, or a salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent therefor.

17. The method according to claim 16, wherein the effective amount is 0.5 mg to 5 g per dose.

18. A method for treating and preventing bacterial vaginitis in a female individual in need thereof, said method comprising

administering to the vaginal area of said female individual, a pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a polyvinyl phthalate sulphate, or a salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent therefor.

19. The method according to claim 18, wherein the effective amount is 0.5 mg to 5 g per dose.

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20. A method for preventing pregnancy in a female individual in need thereof, said method comprising administering to the vaginal area of said female individual a pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a copolymer of maleic acid and styrenesulfonic acid, or a salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent therefor.

21. A method for preventing pregnancy in a female individual in need thereof, said method comprising administering to the vaginal area of said female individual a pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a polyvinyl phthalate sulphate, or a salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent therefor.

22. The method according claim 20 or 21, wherein the effective amount is 0.5 mg to 5 g per dose.

23. The method according to claim 20 or 21, wherein the effective amount is administered to the vaginal area of said female individual prior to vaginal intercourse or immediately thereafter.

24. A polyvinyl phthalate sulphate polymer, or a salt thereof.

25. A polyvinyl phthalate sulphate polymer, or a salt thereof, wherein said polymer or salt thereof is a mixed ester comprising phthalate and sulphate functional groups on a polyvinyl backbone.

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